

REMARKS

Claims 16, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 46, and 47 are currently amended. Claim 48 is canceled. Claim 56 is new. Reconsideration of the application in view of the amendments above and remarks below is requested.

I: Withdrawn Claims

Applicants traverse the withdrawal of claim 55. The Examiner contends that new claim 55 excludes an amino acid substitution at the position of the elected species. New claim 55 depends upon Claim 16, which includes the elected species. Reconsideration is urged.

II: Claim Objections

Claim 16 and 46 are currently amended to remove reference to position 296 and to include reference to N269K. Reconsideration is urged.

III. Double Patenting

Positions 68 and 131 are removed from claim 16. Reconsideration is urged.

IV. The Rejection of Claims 1-9 under 35 U.S.C. 102 and 103

Claims 16, 21, 22, 27, 31, 34, 39, 43 and 50-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Aaslyng (U.S. Patent No. 5,665,587). Claims 16-18, 26, 29, 30, 32, 35, 36, 39-41 and 51-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Brode (USPN 5,599,730). Claims 16-22, 24, 26, 30, 32, 34, 37-39, 41-46 and 50-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ghosh (USPN 6,376,450). Claims 16-18, 27, 48, 50-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103) as being obvious in light of Ballinger (USPN5,741,664; USPN 5,780,285, USPN5,837,516) and Gosseling (USPN6,121,226). Claims 16-18, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 31, 32, 34, 38, 41, 43, 46, 47 and 50-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103) as being obvious in light of Ballinger and Gosseling in view of Aaslyng (USPN 5,665,587 and Bode (USPN 6,599,570). Claims 16-19, 21, 25-27, 30, 31, 33, 34, 42, 46 and 51-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103) as being obvious in light of Ballinger and Gosseling in view of Brode and Christianson (USPN 5,340,735). Claims 16-19, 26, 27, 41 and 51-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103) as being obvious in light of Ballinger and Gosseling in view of Brode and Sierkstra (USPN 5,837,517). Claims 19-22, 24, 26, 30, 32, 34, 37-39, 41-46 and 50-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103) as being

obvious in light of Ballinger and Gosseling in view of Brode and Ghosh. Claims 28, 50, 51, 53 and 54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103) as being obvious in light of Ballinger and Gosseling in view of Brode and Bott (USPN 5,700,676).

The cited references disclosed protease variants. However, none of the references disclose or suggest the protease variants in the amended claims herein.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the amended claims overcome these rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102 and 35 U.S.C. 103. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections in light of the amendments herein.

V. Conclusion

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that all claims are in condition for allowance. Early action to that end is respectfully requested. The Examiner is hereby invited to contact the undersigned by telephone at (212) 840-0097 (X14) if there are any questions concerning this amendment or application.

Should any additional fee(s) be due, the U.S.P.T.O. is authorized to charge the Deposit Account of Novozymes North America Inc. *i.e.*, Deposit Account No. 50-1701.

Respectfully submitted,

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